

Message Text

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TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: STATEMENT BY UNDER SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS
PHILIP C. HABIB, BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN
AFFAIRS, MARCH 3, 1977

1. HERewith TEXT OF SUBJECT STATEMENT.
2. QUOTE SOUTHERN AFRICA IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY, MR. CHAIRMAN, TO SPEAK TO
THIS COMMITTEE ON A CRITICAL QUESTION: THE IMPORTANCE
FOR THE WORLD AT LARGE OF ACHIEVING JUST SOLUTIONS TO
THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND THE ROLE WHICH THE
UNITED STATES CAN PLAY IN CONTRIBUTING TO THOSE SOLUTIONS.
I BELIEVE THAT OUR TIME TOGETHER CAN BE MOST PRODUCTIVELY
SPENT IN AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND WILL THEREFORE KEEP MY
PREPARED REMARKS TO A MINIMUM.

3. I PARTICULARLY WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR
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BEFORE YOU AT A TIME WHEN THE WHOLE QUESTION OF U.S.
POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA IS UNDER URGENT AND COMPRE-
HENSIVE REVIEW WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND OTHER
CONCERNED EXECUTIVE AGENCIES. THE VIEWS AND CONCERNS

EXPRESSED BY YOUR COMMITTEE HERE TODAY CAN HELP US TO
CLARIFY THE ISSUES AND TO FORMULATE POLICIES TO DEAL WITH
THOSE ISSUES FORTHRIGHTLY AND POSITIVELY.

4. I CAN TELL YOU THAT THE GENERAL THRUST OF OUR POLICY

REVIEW HAS BEEN TO FIND WAYS OF STRENGTHENING THE COMMITMENT OF THE U.S. TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND RACIAL EQUALITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND OF DEMONSTRATING THAT COMMITMENT IN TANGIBLE AND MEANINGFUL WAYS. IT IS REGRETTABLY THE CASE THAT OUR ACTIONS IN THE PAST HAVE SOMETIMES LED OTHERS, BOTH HERE IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD, TO QUESTION THE DEPTH AND SINCERITY OF THAT COMMITMENT. IT IS THE ADMINISTRATION'S EARNEST HOPE THAT WHEN THE HISTORICAL RECORD IS FINALLY WRITTEN, THERE WILL BE NO SHADOW OF A DOUBT AS TO WHERE THE U.S. STOOD ON ONE OF THE GREAT MORAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES OF OUR TIME.

5. PERHAPS THE MOST CONCRETE DEMONSTRATION TO DATE OF THAT RENEWED SENSE OF COMMITMENT IS THE ADMINISTRATION'S UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS TO REPEAL THE SO-CALLED BYRD AMENDMENT, UNDER WHICH THE U.S. HAS SINCE 1971 IMPORTED RAW MATERIALS FROM SOUTHERN RHODESIA IN OPEN VIOLATION OF ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AS SPELLED OUT IN THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER. SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE, TESTIFYING BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS ON FEBRUARY 10, STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER PERSONALLY ATTACHES TO THE REPEAL OF THIS MEASURE.

6. I WOULD LIKE FOR A MOMENT TO FOCUS ON THE BROADER CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH OUR POLICIES TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA
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MUST BE VIEWED. IN CONSTRUCTING A POLICY TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THAT REGION, WE MUST HAVE A SURE UNDERSTANDING OF OUR OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS AND ACT ACCORDINGLY.

7. WHAT ARE THOSE INTERESTS, AND HOW DO WE SERVE THEM BEST IN RELATION TO SOUTHERN AFRICA?

-- FIRST, I BELIEVE THAT OUR FOREIGN POLICY MUST BE TRUE TO OUR OWN IDEALS AS A NATION. PRESIDENT CARTER HAS, ON MANY OCCASIONS, STATED CLEARLY AND FORCEFULLY HIS OWN PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS. THAT COMMITMENT REQUIRES OUR FIRM AND CLEAR OPPOSITION TO RACIAL AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE WHEREVER IT EXISTS. A POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA THAT IS NOT FIRMLY GROUNDED ON THIS PRINCIPLE WOULD BE INCONSISTENT WITH OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER AND THEREFORE WOULD NOT COMMAND THE SUPPORT OF

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. MOREOVER, IT WOULD CAST DOUBT ON OUR COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE BOTH HERE AT HOME AND ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD.

-- SECONDLY, WE BELIEVE FIRMLY THAT THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA HOLD THE KEY TO THE SOLUTION OF AFRICAN PROBLEMS. THE U.S. WILL REMAIN FULLY COMMITTED TO USING ITS POLITICAL

AND ECONOMIC INFLUENCE AND ITS DIPLOMATIC OFFICES TO SUPPORT RACIAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT. BUT IT IS NOT FOR US, OR FOR ANY OTHER EXTERNAL POWER, TO ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE ITS OWN IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO AFRICA, OUR AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS ANDREW YOUNG STRESSED THAT U.S. POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND AFRICA AS A WHOLE, WOULD BE DEVELOPED IN THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE CONSULTATIONS WITH AFRICAN LEADERS.

-- THE OTHER IMPORTANT REASON FOR OUR PREFERENCE FOR AFRICAN SOLUTIONS TO AFRICAN PROBLEMS IS TO AVOID SITUATIONS WHICH MAKE AFRICA AN ARENA FOR GREAT POWER RIVALRY, AS HAPPENED IN ANGOLA. PROLONGED VIOLENCE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, BORNE OUT OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INJUSTICE, COULD CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND CONFRONTATION. WE BELIEVE THAT OUR BEST DEFENSE AGAINST THIS POSSIBILITY IS TO SUPPORT POLICIES THAT WILL LIMIT THE AREAS WHERE POTENTIAL CONFLICT MAY ARISE.

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IN MANY INSTANCES, THEIR INTERESTS AND INFLUENCE GREATLY EXCEED OUR OWN. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT OUR TRADITIONAL FRIENDS ARE EQUALLY CONCERNED AND ANXIOUS TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS OF THE REGION. TO THE EXTENT THAT WE CAN COMBINE AND COORDINATE OUR EFFORTS, THE PROSPECTS FOR ENCOURAGING MEANINGFUL SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE WILL BE GREATLY ENHANCED. DURING HIS VISIT TO EUROPE AND JAPAN, VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE STRESSED THAT THE UNITED STATES INTENDS TO CONSULT EVEN MORE CLOSELY IN THE FUTURE ON WAYS TO BRING OUR COLLECTIVE INFLUENCE TO BEAR IN SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

-- FROM THE STANDPOINT OF OUR OWN ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS, WE MAINTAIN FIRMLY THAT THE U.S. HAS NO REASON TO FEAR THE NECESSARY AND INEVITABLE ACHIEVEMENT OF RACIAL EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. TO HOLD ANY OTHER VIEW WOULD BE TO REFUTE THE HISTORY OF THE PAST THREE DECADES AND TO DENY THE OBVIOUS FACT THAT THE U.S. HAS BEEN ABLE TO ESTABLISH COOPERATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONS WITH NEWLY EMERGENT NATIONS IN AFRICA AND ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD. INDEED, IT IS ONLY WHERE PROGRESS TOWARD SOCIAL, RACIAL AND POLITICAL JUSTICE IS DELAYED

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OR FRUSTRATED THAT THE U.S. HAS ANY CAUSE FOR CONCERN THAT CONDITIONS MAY ARISE THAT ARE INHOSPITABLE TO OUR BASIC NATIONAL INTERESTS. IT IS FOR THIS REASON AS WELL THAT WE MUST REMAIN FULLY COMMITTED TO HELPING THOSE WHO SEEK RAPID, PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

-- FINALLY, THE U.S. HAS A STAKE IN WHAT HAPPENS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA BECAUSE OF OUR BELIEF THAT POLITICAL HARMONY CAN AND MUST BE ACHIEVED IN DIVERSE SOCIETIES LIKE OUR OWN. THE WORLD IS AFFLICTED WITH NATIONS IN WHICH MEN OF GOOD WILL HAVE NOT YET CONVINCED THEIR COUNTRYMEN THAT ETHNIC, RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES DO NOT CONSTITUTE A CAUSE FOR DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE. SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING ORDERLY TRANSITIONS TO DEMOCRATIC RULE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, WITH PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

FOR ALL, REGARDLESS OF RACE, WILL HELP THOSE EVERYWHERE WHO SEEK PEACEFUL RESOLUTIONS TO CONFLICT ARISING FROM ETHNIC, RACIAL OR RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES.

8. HAVING OUTLINED THE CONSIDERATIONS UPON WHICH WE BELIEVE U.S. POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA SHOULD REST, I WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW BRIEFLY THE STATUS OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS TO DATE TO DEVELOP A POLICY CONSISTENT WITH THESE GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND GOALS.

9. IN EARLY 1976, THE UNITED STATES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS, BEGAN ITS ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN THE SEARCH FOR SETTLEMENTS TO THE UNRESOLVED PROBLEMS OF NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA. AS THE COMMITTEE IS AWARE, THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION ACHIEVED A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH WHEN, AFTER MONTHS OF INTENSIVE DIPLOMATIC EFFORT, IT PERSUADED IAN SMITH TO ANNOUNCE PUBLICLY LAST SEPTEMBER 24 HIS ACCEPTANCE IN PRINCIPLE OF MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA WITHIN TWO YEARS.

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10. THAT ANNOUNCEMENT LED TO THE CONVENING OF A CONFERENCE OF THE RHODESIAN PARTIES UNDER BRITISH CHAIRMANSHIP IN GENEVA LAST OCTOBER. REGRETTABLY, THAT CONFERENCE ADJOURNED IN DECEMBER WITHOUT MEASURABLE PROGRESS BEING

ACHIEVED ON THE CENTRAL ISSUE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD GUIDE THE TERRITORY TO MAJORITY RULE AND INDEPENDENCE.

11. A MISSION TO SOUTHERN AFRICA LED BY AMBASSADOR IVOR RICHARD, THE BRITISH CHAIRMAN OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, WAS UNSUCCESSFUL IN BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE RHODESIAN

AUTHORITIES AND THE NATIONALISTS. ON JANUARY 24, IAN SMITH PUBLICLY REJECTED PROPOSALS THAT ENVISIONED A BRITISH PRESENCE IN RHODESIA DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD. THAT PRESENCE WAS DESIGNED TO SERVE AS A BALANCING FORCE BETWEEN WHITES AND BLACKS, ASSURING THE FORMER OF A TRANQUIL TRANSITION AND THE LATTER OF AN IRREVERSIBLE PROCESS TOWARD MAJORITY RULE WITHIN A SHORT, FIXED TIME FRAME.

12. THIS ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE TO SMITH'S REJECTION WAS CATEGORIC. WE STATED OUR FIRM SUPPORT FOR THE BRITISH AND OUR BELIEF THAT THE PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY THEM OFFERED A SOUND BASIS FOR CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS. WE WARNED SMITH THAT HIS INTENTION TO SEEK AN INTERNAL SOLUTION FROM WHICH LEADING NATIONALISTS WOULD BE EXCLUDED WOULD CLEARLY BE UNWORKABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE. IT REMAINS OUR FIRM CONVICTION THAT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT THAT EXCLUDES IMPORTANT NATIONALIST LEADERS WILL NOT BRING AN END TO THE WAR AND, ON THE CONTRARY, COULD WELL FUEL THE FIRES OF CIVIL STRIFE.

13. ON FEBRUARY 10, SECRETARY VANCE REPEATED BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS OUR CLEAR STATEMENT TO SMITH THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN THE RHODESIAN

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REGIME COUNT ON ANY FORM OF AMERICAN ASSISTANCE IN ITS EFFORT TO PREVENT MAJORITY RULE. IN THE SAME STATEMENT, THE SECRETARY REAFFIRMED THE ADMINISTRATION'S UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT FOR REPEAL OF THE BYRD AMENDMENT. HE UNDERScoreD THE IMPORTANCE THAT REPEAL WOULD HAVE IN STRENGTHENING OUR OWN LEVERAGE IN PROMOTING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA AND IN DISABUSING IAN SMITH AND THE PRESENT RHODESIAN AUTHORITIES OF ANY HOPE THEY MIGHT STILL HAVE THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL ASSIST THEM IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PREVENT MAJORITY RULE.

14. THE ADMINISTRATION WILL NOT BE CONTENT TO END ITS EFFORTS HERE, HOWEVER. WE ARE CONTINUING TO SEEK OTHER WAYS TO BRING OUR POSITIVE INFLUENCE TO BEAR IN ENCOURAGING RAPID, PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

15. DESPITE SMITH'S REJECTION, NEITHER THE BRITISH NOR WE HAVE ABANDONED THE SEARCH FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. DURING FEBRUARY, WE HAVE TWICE CONSULTED WITH BRITISH OFFICIALS HERE IN WASHINGTON, MOST RECENTLY LAST WEEK, TO CONSIDER WHAT NEW INITIATIVES MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO GET NEGOTIATIONS GOING AGAIN. ON THOSE OCCASIONS WE HAVE REAFFIRMED OUR SUPPORT FOR THE LEADING ROLE THAT BRITAIN, AS THE RECOGNIZED CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY IN RHODESIA, MUST CONTINUE TO PLAY.

16. WE ARE URGENTLY CONSULTING WITH THE AFRICAN PARTIES MOST INTERESTED AND CONCERNED ON POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS. AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S RECENT VISIT TO AFRICA AFFORDED THE ADMINISTRATION AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH CONTACT AT A HIGH LEVEL ON THIS AND OTHER ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO AFRICANS AND TO STRESS OUR INTENTION TO DEVELOP OUR POLICIES IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH THEM. SO LONG AS THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS TOWARD THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AFRICA'S LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS

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FOR RACIAL EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE, AFRICA'S COMMITMENT TO ARMED STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE THESE ENDS WILL REMAIN A REAL ONE. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THAT THE LEADERS OF AFRICA WOULD ALL PREFER A SOLUTION THAT PREVENTS FURTHER BLOODSHED AND DESTRUCTION. IT IS THE TASK OF DIPLOMACY, AND PARTICULARLY OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN DIPLOMACY IN THIS INSTANCE, TO HELP THE PARTIES INVOLVED FIND WAYS TO MAKE A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION POSSIBLE.

17. WITH RESPECT TO NAMIBIA, THE UNITED STATES HAS SUPPORTED AND WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR SOUTH AFRICA TO END ITS ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF THE TERRITORY AND FOR FREE ELECTIONS THERE UNDER UNITED NATIONS SUPERVISION. WE BELIEVE THAT ALL OF NAMIBIA'S AUTHENTIC POLITICAL VOICES, INCLUDING SPECIFICALLY SWAPO, MUST BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES ON THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL FUTURE. ANY ATTEMPTED SOLUTION THAT EXCLUDES IMPORTANT NAMIBIAN POLITICAL GROUPS OR THAT FAILS TO WIN THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS NO SOLUTION AT ALL AND WILL NOT RECEIVE THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE U.S.

18. DURING HIS VISIT TO AFRICA, AMBASSADOR YOUNG FOUND WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR THE CONTINUATION OF AMERICAN EFFORTS TO DEVELOP A NEGOTIATING FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH THE PRINCIPAL PARTIES CAN ESTABLISH THE STEPS LEADING TO INDEPENDENCE AND MAJORITY RULE IN NAMIBIA. WE HAVE

ASSURED ALL OF THE INTERESTED PARTIES THAT OUR DIPLOMATIC GOOD OFFICES WILL REMAIN AVAILABLE AND THAT OUR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A SETTLEMENT ACCEPTABLE TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WILL CONTINUE.

19. A KEY FACTOR IN THE SUCCESS OF AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO DATE HAS BEEN OUR ABILITY TO SPEAK DIRECTLY AND FRANKLY WITH ALL OF THE INVOLVED PARTIES. BY VIRTUE
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OF ITS PROXIMITY AND TIES WITH RHODESIA AND ITS OCCUPATION OF NAMIBIA, SOUTH AFRICA'S ROLE IN THE RESOLUTION OF BOTH PROBLEMS CANNOT BE IGNORED. WITH RESPECT TO RHODESIA, WE HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED INDICATIONS THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS STILL INTERESTED IN A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. WITH RESPECT TO NAMIBIA, WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER SOUTH AFRICA IS GENUINELY INTERESTED IN MOVING TOWARD AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION. SO LONG AS WE ARE ASSURED OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WILLINGNESS TO BE HELPFUL, THE UNITED STATES WILL BE PREPARED TO CONTINUE ITS CONSULTATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA'S LEADERS ON THESE ISSUES. IT SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR TO ALL, HOWEVER, THAT THE U.S. HAS NO INTEREST IN ANY PROPOSED SOLUTIONS THAT WOULD COMPROMISE THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED AND THEIR DESIRES FOR MAJORITY RULE WITH FULL SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE.

20. MOREOVER, OUR WILLINGNESS TO CONSULT WITH SOUTH AFRICA ON THESE ISSUES SHOULD IN NO WAY BE CONSTRUED AS AN ACCEPTANCE OF THAT COUNTRY'S DOMESTIC POLICIES. THE VIOLENCE IN SOWETO AND ELSEWHERE BEARS GRIM TESTIMONY

TO A SOCIETY THAT MUST CHANGE, AND CHANGE RADICALLY, OR FACE THE SURE CALAMITY OF RACIAL VIOLENCE AND CHAOS.

21. WE WILL NOT HESITATE TO SPEAK OUT PUBLICLY AS APPROPRIATE ON EVENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE KNOWN TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES OUR VIEWS, URGING PEACEFUL AND FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE. IN ADDITION, WE WILL SEEK WAYS OF PERSUADING SOUTH AFRICA THAT SUCH CHANGE IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF ALL ITS CITIZENS, BLACK AND WHITE ALIKE. WE ARE LOOKING AT THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER NATIONS CAN USE THEIR INFLUENCE TO BOTH ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE CHANGE. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, WE MUST REMAIN SENSITIVE TO THE DANGER THAT THE ATTITUDES AND REACTIONS UNCLASSIFIED

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OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD TO EVENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA COULD HAVE THE UNFORTUNATE EFFECT OF ENGENDERING GREATER

ISOLATION AND RESISTANCE TO CHANGE. WE MUST TAKE CARE THAT OUR OWN ACTIONS NURTURE RATHER THAN INHIBIT THE CHANGES THAT WE BELIEVE CAN AND MUST BE MADE.

22. THE CHALLENGE THAT CONFRONTS OUR DIPLOMACY, AND THAT OF OTHER NATIONS COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND RACIAL EQUALITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, IS TO FIND WAYS OF TRANSCENDING THE BARRIERS OF FEAR AND SUSPICION AND TO POINT THE WAY TO SOLUTIONS THAT WILL ALLOW ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF THE REGION TO LIVE IN DIGNITY AND PEACE. THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION BUT THAT THE PATH AHEAD

WILL BE FRAUGHT WITH EXTREME DIFFICULTIES. BUT NEITHER
CAN THERE BE ANY QUESTION OF OUR DEDICATION TO CONTINUING
THE SEARCH. UNQUOTE
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